

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
EMIGRATION
OF
Dr. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY,
AND ON THE
SEVERAL ADDRESSES

*Delivered to him on his Arrival at New York.
By M. Cobbet of Philadelphia.*

*“ Du mensonge toujours le vrai demeure maître :
“ Pour paraître honnête homme, en un mot, il faut l'être ;
“ Et jamais, quoi qu'il fasse, un mortel ici bas,
“ Ne peut aux yeux du monde être ce qu'il n'est pas.”*

BOILEAU.

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OBSERVATIONS, &c.

WHEN the arrival of Dr. Priestley in the United States was first announced, I looked upon his emigration (like the proposed retreat of Cowley, to his imaginary Paradise, the Summer Islands) as no more than the effect of that weakness, that delusive caprice, that too often accompanies the decline of life; and which is apt, by a change of place, to flatter age with a renovation of faculties, and with the return of departed genius. Viewing him as a man that sought repose, my heart welcomed him to the shores of peace, and wished him, what he certainly ought to have wished himself, a quiet obscurity. But his Answers to the Addresses of the Democratic and other Societies at New York, place him in quite a different light, and subject him to the animadversions of a public, among whom they have been industriously propagated.

No Man has a right to pry into his neighbour's private concerns; and the opinions of every Man are his private concerns, while he keeps them so; that is to say, while they are confined to himself, his Family, and particular Friends: But when he makes those opinions public; when he once attempts to make Converts, whether it be in Religion, Politics, or any thing else; when he once comes forward as a Candidate for public Admiration, Esteem, or Compassion, his Opinions, his Principles, his Motives, every Action of his life, public or private, become the fair Subject of public discussion. On this principle, which the Doctor ought to be the last among Mankind to controvert, it is easy to perceive that these observations need no apology.

His Answers to the Addresses of the New York Societies are evidently calculated to mislead and deceive the People of the United States. He there endeavours to impose himself on them for a Sufferer in the Cause of Liberty; and makes a canting profession of Moderation, in direct contradiction to the conduct of his whole Life.

He says, he hopes to find here, "that Protection from Violence, which Laws and Government promise in all countries, but which he has not found in his own." He certainly must suppose that no European intelligence ever reaches this side of the Atlantic, or that the inhabitants of these countries are too dull to comprehend the sublime events that mark his life and character. Perhaps I shall shew him, that it is not the people of England alone who know how to estimate the merit of Dr. Priestley.

Let us examine his claims to our compassion; Let us see whether his charge against the Laws and Government of his country be just, or not.

On the 14th of July, 1791, an unruly mob assembled in the town of Birmingham, set fire to his house, and burnt it, together with all it contained. This is the subject of his complaint, and the pretended cause of his emigration. The fact is not denied; but in the relation of facts circumstances must not be forgotten. To judge of the Doctor's charge against his country, we must take a retrospective view of his conduct, and of the circumstances that led to the destruction of his property.

It is about twelve years since he began to be distinguished among the dissenters from the established church of England. He preached up a kind of *deism*, which nobody understood, and which it was thought the Doctor understood full as well as his neighbours. This doctrine afterwards assumed the name of Unitarianism, and the *religieux* of the order were called, or rather they called themselves, Unitarians. The sect never rose in consequence; and the founder had the mortification of seeing his darling Unitarianism growing quite out of date with himself when the French Revolution came, and gave them both a short respite from eternal oblivion.

Those who know any thing of the English dissenters, know that they always introduce their political claims and projects under the mask of religion. The Doctor was one of those who entertained hopes of bringing about a Revolution in England upon the French plan; and for this purpose he found it would be very convenient for him to be at the head of a religious sect. Unitarianism was now revived, and the society held regular meetings at Birmingham. In the inflammatory discourses, called sermons, that were delivered at these meetings, the English Constitution was first openly attacked; and doctrines were there held forth subversive of all civil and religious order. The press soon swarmed with publications expressive of these principles. The revolutionists began to form societies all over the kingdom, between which a mode of communication was established, in perfect conformity to that of the Jacobin clubs in France.

Nothing was neglected by this branch of the Parisian *Propagande* to excite the people to a general insurrection. Inflammatory Hand bills, Advertisements, Federation Dinners, Toasts, Sermons, Prayers; in short, every trick that religious or political Duplicity could suggest, was played off to destroy a Constitution which has borne the Test, and attracted the Admiration of ages; and to establish in its place a new system fabricated by themselves.

The 14th of July, 1791, was of too much note in the annals of modern Regeneration to be neglected by these regenerated politicians. A club of them, of which Dr. Priestley was a member, gave public notice of a feast, to be held at Birmingham, in which they intended to celebrate the French Revolution. Their endeavours had hitherto excited no other sentiments in what may be called the people of England than that of contempt. The people of Birmingham, however, felt on this occasion, a

convulsive moment. They were scandalized at this public notice for holding in their town a festival to celebrate events, which were in reality a subject of the deepest horror : And seeing in it at the same time an open and audacious attempt to destroy the Constitution of their country, and with it their happiness, they thought their understandings and loyalty insulted, and prepared to avenge themselves by the chastisement of the English Revolutionists, in the midst of their scandalous orgies. The feast nevertheless took place ; but the Doctor, knowing himself to be the grand projector, and consequently the particular object of his townsmen's vengeance, prudently kept away. The cry of *Church and King* was the signal for the people to assemble ; which they did to a considerable number, opposite the hotel where the convives were met. The club dispersed, and the mob proceeded to breaking the windows, and other acts of violence incident to such scenes ; but let it be remembered that no personal violence was offered. Perhaps it would have been well if they had vented their anger on the persons of the Revolutionists ; provided they had contented themselves with the ceremony of the horse-pond or blanket. Certain it is, that it would have been very fortunate if the riot had ended this way ; but when that many-headed monster, a Mob, is once roused and put in motion, who can stop its destructive steps !

From the *hotel of the federation* the mob proceeded to Dr. Priestley's Meeting-House, which they very nearly destroyed in a little time. Had they stopped here, all would yet have been well. The destruction of this temple of sedition and infidelity would have been of no great consequence ; but, unhappily for them and the town of Birmingham, they could not be separated, before they had destroyed the houses and property of many members of the club. Some of these houses, among which was Dr. Priestley's, were situated at the distance of some miles from town ; the mob were in force to defy all the efforts of the civil power, and, unluckily none of the military could be brought to the place till some days after the 14th of July. In the mean time many spacious and elegant houses were burnt, and much valuable property destroyed ; but it is certainly worthy remark, that during these unlawful proceedings, not a single person was killed or wounded, either wilfully or by accident, except some of the rioters themselves. At the end of four or five days, this riot, which seemed to threaten more serious consequences, was happily terminated by the arrival of a detachment of dragoons ; and tranquillity was restored to the distressed town of Birmingham.

The magistrates used every exertion in their power to quell this riot in its very earliest stage, and continued so to do to the last. The Earl of Plymouth condescended to attend, and act as a justice of the peace ; several clergymen of the church of England also attended in the same capacity, and they all were inde-

fatigable in their endeavours to put a stop to the depredations, and to re-establish order and tranquillity. Every one knows that in such cases it is very difficult to discriminate, and that it is neither necessary nor just, if it be possible, to imprison, try, and execute the whole of a mob. Eleven of these rioters were, however, indicted; seven of them were acquitted, four found guilty, and of these four, two suffered death. These unfortunate men were, according to the law, prosecuted on the part of the King; and it has been allowed by the Doctor's own partizans, that the prosecution was carried on with every possible enforcement, and even rigour, by the judges and counsellors. The pretended lenity was laid to the charge of the jury! What a contradiction! They accuse the government of screening the rioters from the penalty due to their crimes, and at the same time they accuse the jury of their acquittal! It is the misfortune of Dr. Priestley and all his adherents ever to be inconsistent with themselves.

After this general view of the riots, in which the Doctor was unlawfully despoiled of his property, let us return to the merits of his particular case, and his complaint; and here let it be recollected, that it is not of the rioters alone that he complains, but of the laws and government of his country also. Upon an examination of particulars we shall find, that so far from his having just cause of complaint, the laws have rendered him strict justice, if not something more; and that if any party has reason to complain of their execution, it is the town of Birmingham, and not Dr. Priestley.

Some time after the riots, the Doctor and the other Revolutionists who had property destroyed, brought their actions for damages against the town of Birmingham, or rather against the Hundred of which that town makes a part. The Doctor laid his damages at 412*l.* 11*s.* 9*d.* *sterling*; of which sum 420*l.* 15*s.* was for works in manuscript, which he said, had been consumed in the flames. The trial of this cause took up nine hours: The jury gave a verdict in his favour; but curtailed the damages to 250*l.* 18*s.* It was rightly considered that the imaginary value of the manuscript works ought not to have been included in the damages; because the Doctor being the author of them, he in fact possessed them still, and the loss could be little more than a few sheets of dirty paper. Besides, if they were to be estimated by those he had published for some years before, their destruction was a benefit instead of a loss, both to himself and his country. This sum then of 420*l.* 15*s.* being deducted, the damages stood at 370*l.* 16*s.* 9*d.* and it should not be forgotten that even a great part of this sum was charged for an apparatus of philosophical instruments, which in spite of the most unpadronable

gaſconade of the Philoſopher, * can be looked upon as a thing of imaginary value only; and ought not to be eſtimated at its *coſt* any more than a collection of ſhells or insects, or any other of the *frivola* of a virtuoso.

Now it is notorious that actions for damages are always brought for much higher ſums than are ever expected to be recovered. Sometimes they are brought for three times the amount of the real damage ſuſtained; ſometimes for double, and ſometimes for only a third more than the real damage. If we view then the Doctor's eſtimate in the moſt favourable light; if we ſuppoſe that he made but the addition of one-third to his real damages, the ſum he ought to have received would be no more than 2467l. 17s. 10d. whereas he actually received 2509l. 18s. which was 35l. 0s. 2d. more than he had a right to expect. And yet he complains that he has not found protection from the laws and government of his country! If he had been the very beſt ſubject in England in place of one of the very worſt, what could the laws have done more for him! Nothing certainly can be a ſtronger proof of the independence of the courts of juſtice, and of the impartial execution of the laws in England than the circumſtances and reſult of this cauſe. A man who had for many years been the avowed and open enemy of the government and conſtitution, had his property deſtroyed by a mob, who declared themſelves the friends of both, and who roſe on him becauſe he was not. This mob were purſued by the government whoſe cauſe they thought they were defending; ſome of them ſuffered death; and the inhabitants of the place where they aſſembled, were obliged to indemnify the man, whoſe property they had deſtroyed. It would be curious to know what ſort of protection this *reverend* Doctor, this "friend of humanity" wanted. Would nothing ſatisfy him but the blood of the whole mob? Did he wiſh to ſee the town of Birmingham like that of Lyons, razed, and all its induſtrious and loyal inhabitants butchered; becauſe ſome of them had been carried to commit unlawful exceſſes from their deteſtation of his wicked projects? BIRMINGHAM HAS COMBATTED AGAINST PRIESTLEY. BIRMINGHAM IS NO MORE. This I ſuppoſe would have ſatisfied the charitable modern philoſopher, who pretended, and who the Democratic ſociety ſay did, "return to his enemies bleſſings for curſings." Woe to the wretch that is expoſed to the benediſtions of a modern philoſopher. His "*dextre vengerelle*" is ten thouſand times more to be feared than

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* "You have deſtroyed the moſt truly valuable and uſeful apparatus of philoſophical inſtruments that perhaps any individual, in this or any other country, was ever poſſeſſed of, in my uſe of which I annually ſpent large ſums, with no pecuniary view whatever, but only in the advancement of ſcience, for the benefit of my country and of mankind."

the bloody poignard of the assassin : The latter is drawn on individuals only, the other is pointed at the human race. Happily for the people of Birmingham these blessings had no effect ; there was no National Convention, Revolutionary Tribunal, or Guillotine in England.

As I have already observed, if the Doctor had been the best and most peaceable subject in the kingdom, the government and laws could not have yielded him more perfect protection ; his complaint, would therefore be groundless, if he had given no provocation to the people, if he had in no wise contributed to the riots. If then he has received ample justice, considered as an innocent man, and a good subject, what shall we think of his complaint, when we find that he was himself the principal cause of these riots ; and that the rioters did nothing that was not perfectly consonant to the principles he had for many years been labouring to infuse into their minds ?

That he and his club were the cause of the riots will not be disputed ; for had they not given an insulting notice of their intention to celebrate the horrors of the fourteenth of July, accompanied with an inflammatory hand-bill, intended to excite an insurrection against the government, * no riot would ever have taken place, and consequently its disastrous effects would have been avoided. But it has been said, that there was nothing offensive in this inflammatory hand bill ; because forsooth " the matter of it (however indecent and untrue) was not *more virulent* than Pain's Rights of Man, Mackintosh's Answer to Burke, Remarks on the Constitution of England, &c. &c. which had been lately published without incurring the *censure of government*." So ; an inflammatory performance, acknowledged to be *indecent* and *untrue*, is not offensive, because it is not *more virulent* than some other performances, which have escaped the censure of government ! If this is not a new manner of arguing, it is at least an odd one. But this hand bill had something *more malicious* in it, if not *more virulent*, than even the inflammatory works above-mentioned. They were more difficult to come at ; to have them they must be bought. They contained something like reasoning, the fallacy of which the government was very sure would be detected by the good sense of those who took the pains to read them. A hand bill was a more commodious instrument of sedition : It was calculated to have immediate effect. Besides, if there had been nothing offensive in it, why did the club think proper to disown it in so ceremonious a manner ? They disowned it with the most solemn assertions, offered a reward for apprehending the author, and afterwards justified it as an inoffensive thing. Here is a palpable inconsistency. The fact is, they perceived that this precious morsel of eloquence, in place of

* This hand-bill was disowned by the club, and they offered a reward for apprehending the author ; but they took care to send him to France before their advertisement appeared.

raising a mob for them, was like to raise one against them : They saw the storm gathering, and in the moment of fear disowned the writing. After the danger was over, seeing they could not exculpate themselves from the charge of having published it, they defended it as an inoffensive performance.

The Doctor in his justificatory letter to the people of Birmingham, says that the company were assembled on this occasion "to celebrate the emancipation of a neighbouring nation from tyranny, without intimating a desire of *any thing more than an improvement of their own constitution.*" Excessive modesty ! *No-thing but an improvement ? A LA FRANCOISE* of course ? However, with respect to the Church, as it was a point of conscience, the club do not seem to have been altogether so moderate in their designs. "Believe me," says the Doctor, in the same letter, "the Church of England which you now think you are supporting, has received a greater *blow* by this conduct of yours, than *I and all my friends have ever aimed at it.*" They had then it seems aimed a *blow* at the established church, and were forming a plan for *improving* the constitution ; and yet the Doctor, in the same letter, twice expresses his astonishment at their being treated as the enemies of church and state. In a letter to the students of the college of Hackney he says, *A Hierarchy, equally the bane of christianity and rational liberty,* now confesses its weakness ; and be assured that you will see its complete reformation or its *fall.*" And yet he has the assurance to tell the people of Birmingham that their superiors have deceived them in representing him and his sect as the enemies of church and state.

But say they, we certainly exercise the right of freemen in assembling together ; and even if our meeting had been unlawful, cognizance should have been taken of it by the magistracy : There can be no liberty where a ferocious mob is suffered to supersede the law. Very true. This is what the Doctor has been told a thousand times, but he never would believe it. He still continued to bawl out : "The sunshine of reason will assuredly chase away and dissipate the mists of darkness and error ; and when the majesty of the people *is insulted*, or they feel themselves oppressed by *any set of men*, they have the power to redress the grievance." So the people of Birmingham, feeling their majesty insulted by a *set of men* (and a very impudent set of men too,) who audaciously attempted to persuade them that they were "*all slaves and idolators,*" and to seduce them from their duty to God and their country, rose to *redress the grievance.* And yet he complains ? Ah ! says he, but my good townsmen,

" - - - - you mistake the matter :

" For in all scruples of this nature

" No man includes *himself*, nor turns

" The point upon his own concerns."

And therefore he says to the people of Birmingham : " You have been misled." But had they suffered themselves to be mis-

led by himself into an insurrection against the government ; had they burnt the churches, cut the throats of the clergy, and hung the magistrates, military officers and nobility to the lamp posts, would he not have said that they exercised a sacred right ? Nay, was not the very festival, which was the immediate cause of the riots, held expressly to celebrate scenes like these ? to celebrate the inglorious triumphs of a mob ? The fourteenth of July was a day marked with the blood of the innocent, and eventually the destruction of an empire. The events of that day must strike horror to every heart except that of a deistical philosopher, and would brand with eternal infamy any other nation but France ; which, thanks to the benign influence of the Rights of Man, has made such a progress in ferociousness, murder, sacrilege, and every species of infamy, that the horrors of the fourteenth of July are already forgotten.

What we celebrate we must approve ; and does not the man, who approved of the events of the 14th of July, blush to complain of the Birmingham riots ? “ Happily,” says he to the people of Birmingham, “ happily the minds of Englishmen have a horror for murder, and therefore you did not, I hope, think of that ; though by your clamorous demanding me at the hotel, it is probable that, at that time, some of you intended me some personable injury.” Yes, Sir, happily the minds of Englishmen have a horror for murder, but who will say that the minds of Englishmen, or English women either, would have a horror for murder, if you had succeeded in overturning their religion and constitution, and introducing your Frenchified system of liberty ? The French were acknowledged to be the most polite, gentle, compassionate, and hospitable people in all Europe : What are they now ? Let Lafayette, Brissot, Anacharsis Cloots, or Thomas Paine himself, answer this question.

Let us see a little how mobs have acted under the famous governments that the Doctor so much admires.

I shall not attempt a detail of the horrors committed by the cut-throat Jourdan and his associates in Provence, Avignon, Languedoc, and Roussillon. Towns and villages sacked ; Gentlemen’s seats and castles burnt, and their inhabitants massacred ; magistrates insulted, beat, and imprisoned, sometimes killed ; prisoners set at liberty to cut the throats of those they had already robbed. The exploits of this band of *Patriots* would fill whole volumes. They reduced a great part of the inhabitants of the finest and most fertile country in the whole world to a degree of misery and ruin that would never have been forgotten, had it not been so far eclipsed since, the operation of what is in “ that devoted country” called the law. The amount of the damages, sustained in property, was perhaps a hundred thousand times as great as that sustained by the Revolutionists at Birmingham. When repeated accounts of these murderous scenes were laid before the National Assembly, what was the

consequence? what the redress? "We had our fears" said Monsieur Gentil, "for the prisoners of Avignon, and for the lives and property of the inhabitants of that unhappy country; but these fears are now changed into a certainty: The prisoners are released; the country seats are burnt, and" - - - - Monsieur Gentil was called to order, and not suffered to proceed; after which these precious "Guardians of the Rights of Man" passed a censure on him, for having slandered the patriots. It is notorious that the chief of these cut-throats, Jourdan, has since produced his butcheries in Avignon as a proof of *civism*, and that he is now a distinguished character among the real friends of the Revolution.

Does the Doctor remember having heard any thing about the glorious achievements of the 10th of August, 1792? Has he ever made an estimate of the property destroyed in Paris on that and on the following days? Let him compare the destruction that followed the steps of that mob, with the loss of his boasted apparatus; and when he has done this, let him tell us, if he can, where he would now be, if the Government of England had treated him and his friends, as the National Assembly did the sufferers in the riots of the 10th of August. But perhaps he looks upon the events of that day as a glorious victory, a new emancipation, and of course will say, that I degrade the *Heroes* in calling them a Mob. I am not for disputing with him about a name; he may call them the heroes of the 10th of August, if he will; "The heroes of the 14th of July," has always been understood to mean, a *gang of blood-thirsty cannibals*, and I would by no means wish to withhold the title from those of the 10th of August.

Will the Doctor allow, that it was a mob that murdered the state prisoners from Orleans? or does he insist upon calling that massacre an *act of civism*, and the actors in it, the heroes of the 12th of September? But whether it was an act of civism, a massacre, or a victory, or whatever it was, I cannot help giving it a place here, as I find it recorded by his countryman, Dr. Moore. "The mangled bodies," says he, "were lying in the street on the left hand as you go to the *Chateau* from Paris. Some of the lower sort of the inhabitants of Versailles were looking on; the rest, struck with terror, were shut up in their shops and houses. The body of the Duke of Brissac was pointed out, the head and one of the hands were cut off! a man stood near, smoking tobacco, with his sword drawn, and a human hand stuck on the point! another fellow walked carelessly among the bodies, with an entire arm of another of the prisoners fixed to the point of his sword! A waggon afterwards arrived, into which were thrown as many of the slaughtered bodies as the horses could draw! a boy about fifteen years of age was in the waggon, assisting to receive the bodies as they were put in, and packing them in the most convenient manner, with an air of as much indifference as if they had been so many parcels of goods!

One of the wretches who threw in the bodies, and who probably had assisted in the massacre, said to the spectators, in praise of the boy's activity ; " *See that little fellow there ; how bold he is !* "

" The assassins of the prisoners were a party who came from Paris the preceding evening, most of them in post-chaises, for that purpose, and who attacked those unhappy men while they remained in the street, waiting till the gate of the prison, which was prepared for their reception, should be opened.—The detachment which had guarded the prisoners from Orleans, stood shameful and passive spectators of the massacre.—The miserable prisoners being all unarmed, and some of them fettered, could do nothing in their own defence ; they were most of them stabbed—and a few, who attempted resistance, were cut down with sabres.

" There never was a more barbarous and dastardly action performed in the face of the sun.—Gracious Heaven ! were those barbarities, which would disgrace savages, committed by Frenchmen ! by that lively and ingenuous people, whose writings were so much admired, whose society has been so much courted, and whose manners have been so much imitated by all the neighbouring nations ?—This atrocious deed, executed in the streets of Versailles, and the horrors committed in the prisons of Paris, will fix indelible stains on the character of the French nation. It is said, those barbarities revolted the hearts of many of the citizens of Paris and Versailles, as much as they could those of the inhabitants of London or Windsor. It is also said, that those massacres were not committed by the inhabitants of Paris or Versailles, but by a set of hired assassins.—But who hired those assassins ? Who remained in shameful stupor and dastardly inactivity, while their laws were insulted, their prisons violated, and their fellow-citizens butchered in the open streets ? I do not believe, that from the wickedest gangs of highwaymen, house-breakers, and pick-pockets, that infest London and the neighbourhood, men could be selected who could be bribed to murder in cold blood, such a number of their countrymen !—and if they could, I am convinced that no degree of popular delusion they are capable of, no pretext, no motive whatever, could make the inhabitants of London or Windsor, or of any town of Great Britain, suffer such dreadful executions to be performed within their walls."

No ; I hope not : Yet I do not know what might have been effected, by an introduction of the same system of anarchy, that has changed the airy amiable French into a set of the most ferocious inhuman blood-hounds that ever disgraced the human shape.

From scenes like these, the mind turns for relief and consolation to the riot at Birmingham. That riot considered comparatively with what Dr. Priestley and his friends wished and attempted to stir up, was peace, harmony, and gentleness. Has this man any reason to complain ; He will perhaps say, he did

not approve of the French riots and massacres; to which I shall answer that he *did* approve of them. His public celebration of them was a convincing proof of this; and if it were not, his sending his son to Paris, in the midst of them, to request the honour of becoming a French citizen, is a proof that certainly will not be disputed. If then we take a view of the riots of which the Doctor is an admirer, and of those of which he expresses his detestation, we must fear that he is very far from being that "*friend of human happiness*," that the Democratic Society pretend to believe him. In short, in whatever light we view the Birmingham riots, we can see no object that excites our compassion, except the inhabitants of the Hundred, and the unfortunate Rioters themselves.

The charge that the Doctor brings against his country is, that it has not *afforded him protection*. It ought to be remarked here, that there is a material difference between a government that does not at all times afford *sufficient protection*, and one that is *oppressive*. However, in his answers to the New York Addresses, he very politely acquiesces in the government and laws of England being oppressive also. Would he really prefer the proceedings of a *revolutionary tribunal* to those of a court of justice in England? Does he envy the lot of his colleagues Manuel, Lacroix, Danton, and Chabot? How would he look before a tribunal like that of the Princess de Lamballe, for example? When this much-lamented unfortunate lady was dragged before the villains that sat in a kind of mock judgment on her, they were drinking *eau de vie*, to the damnation of those that lay dead before them. Their shirt sleeves were tucked up to their elbows, and their arms, hands, and elbows, and even the goblets they were drinking out of, were besmeared with human blood! I much question if the assassin's stab, or even the last pang of death with all its concomitant bitterness, was half so terrible as the blood-freezing sight of these hell-hounds. Yet this was a *court of justice*, under that constitution, which "the friend of human happiness" wanted to impose on his countrymen! Paine, in speaking of the English government, says exultingly, and as he fancies wittingly, "They manage those things better in France." I fancy this boasting "representative of twenty-four millions of free men," would now be glad to exchange his post of deputy for that of under shoe black to the meanest laquay at the court of London! Would he not with joy exchange his *cachot* with the reversion of the guillotine into the bargain, for the darkest cell in that very Bastille, the destruction of which he has so triumphantly and heroically sung? His fate is a good hint to those who change countries every time they cross the sea. A man of all countries, is a man of no country: And let all those citizens of the world remember, that he who has been a bad subject in his own country, though from some latent motive he may be well received into another, will never be either *trusted* or *respected*.

The Doctor, and his fellow labourers who have lately emigrated to Botany Bay, have been continually bawling out, "A Reform of Parliament." The same visionary delusion seems to have pervaded all reformers in all ages. They do not consider what *can* be done, but what they think ought to be done. They have no calculating principle to direct them to discover whether a reform will cost them more than it is worth or not. They do not set down to count the cost; but, the object being as they think desirable, the means are totally disregarded. If the reformers in France had sit down to count the cost, I do not believe they were villains enough to have pursued their plan as they did. To save a tenth part of their income, they have given the whole, or rather it has been taken from them. To preserve the life of a person, now and then, perhaps unjustly condemned, they have drenched the country with the blood of the innocent. Even the Bastille, that terrible monument of tyranny which has been painted in such frightful colours, contained but *two* state prisoners when it was forced by the mob; and the reformers to deliver these two prisoners, and to guard others from a like fate, have erected Bastilles in every town and in every street.— Before the Revolution, there were only *two* state prisoners; there are now above *two hundred thousand*. Do these people calculate? Certainly not? They will not take man as they find him, and govern him upon principles established by experience; they will have him to be "a faultless monster that the world ne'er saw," and wish to govern him according to a system that never was, or can be brought, into practice. These waking dreams would be of no more consequence than those of the night, were they not generally pursued with an unjustifiable degree of obstinacy and intrigue, and even villainy; and did they not, being always adapted to flatter and inflame the lower orders of the people, often baffle every effort of legal power. Thus it happened in England in the reign of Charles the first; and thus has it happened in France. Some trifling innovation always paves the way to a subversion of a government. The ax in the forest humbly besought a little piece of wood to make it a handle. The forest, consisting of so many stately trees, could not, without manifest cruelty, refuse the "humble" request; but, the handle once granted, the before contemptible tool began to lay about it with so much violence, that in a little time not a tree, nor even shrub, was standing. That a parliamentary reform was the handle by which the English revolutionists intended to effect the destruction of the constitution, need not be insisted on; at least if we believe their own repeated declarations. Paine and some others clearly expressed themselves on this head. The Doctor was more cautious while in England, but, safely arrived in his "asylum," he has been a little more undisguised. He says the troubles in Europe are the natural offspring of the "*forms of government that exist there*;" and that the abuses spring from the "*artificial distinctions in so-*

ciety." I must stop here a moment to remark on the impudence of this assertion. Is it not notorious that *changing* those forms of government, and *destroying* those distinctions in society, has introduced all the troubles in Europe? Had the form of government in France continued what it had been for twelve or thirteen hundred years, would those troubles ever have had an existence? To hazard an assertion like this, a man must be an idiot, or he must think his readers so. It was then the *form* of the English government, and those artificial distinctions; that is to say, of king, prince, bishop, &c. that he wanted to destroy, in order to produce that "*other system of liberty*" which he had been so long dreaming about. In his answer to the address of "the republican natives of Great Britain and Ireland, resident at New York," he says, The wisdom and happiness of republican governments, and the evils resulting from hereditary monarchical ones, cannot appear in a stronger light to you than they do to me;" and yet this same man pretended an inviolable attachment to the *hereditary monarchical government* of Great Britain! Says he, by way of vindicating the principles of his club to the people of Birmingham: "The first toast that was drank, was, "*the King and Constitution.*" What! does he make a merit in England of having *toasted* that which he abominates in America? Alas! Philosophers are but mere men.

It is clear that a parliamentary reform was not the object: An after game was intended; which the vigilance of government, and the natural good sense of the people happily prevented; and the Doctor, disappointed and chagrined, is come here to discharge his heart of the venom it has been long collecting against his country. He tells the Democratic society that he cannot promise to be a better subject of this government than he has been of that of Great Britain. Let us hope that he intends us an agreeable disappointment, if not, the sooner he emigrates back again the better.

System mongers are an unreasonable species of mortals: Time, place, climate, nature itself must give way. They must have the same government in every quarter of the globe; when perhaps there are not two countries which can possibly admit of the same form of government, at the same time. A thousand hidden causes, a thousand circumstances and unforeseen events conspire to the forming of a government. It is always done by little and little. When compleated it presents nothing like a *system*; nothing like a thing composed, and written in a book. It is curious to hear people cite the American government as the summit of human perfection while they decry the English; when it is absolutely nothing more than the government which the kings of England established here, with such little modifications as were necessary on account of the state of society and local circumstances. If then the Doctor is come here for a change of government and laws, he is the most disappointed of

mortals. He will have the mortification to find in his "*asylum*" the same laws as those from which he has fled, the same upright manner of administering them, the same punishment of the oppressor, and the same protection of the oppressed. In the courts of justice he will every day see precedents quoted from the English law-books; and (which to him may appear wonderful) we may venture to predict that it will be very long before they will be supplanted by the bloody records of the revolutionary tribunal. Let him compare the government of these states, and the measures they have pursued, with what has passed under the boasted constitution that he wished to introduce into England, and see if he can find one single instance of the most distant resemblance. In the abolition of negro slavery for example, the government of the United States have not rushed headlong into the mad plan of the National Convention. With much more humane views; with a much more sincere desire of seeing all mankind free and happy, they have, in spite of clubs and societies, proceeded with caution and justice. In short, they have adopted, as nearly as possible, considering the circumstances and situation, the same measures as have been taken by the government which he abhors. He will have the further mortification to find that the government here is not, any more than in England, influenced by the vociferations of fish-women, or by the *toasts* and *resolutions* of popular societies. He will however, have one consolation: Here as well as there, he will find, that the truly great, virtuous and incorruptible man at the head of government, is branded for an *Aristocrat*, by those noisy gentry.

Happiness being the end of all good government, that which produces the most is consequently the best; and comparison being the only method of determining the relative value of things, it is easy to see which is preferable, the tyranny which the French formerly enjoyed, or the liberty and equality they at present labour under. If the doctor had come about a year sooner, he might have had the satisfaction of being not only an ear, but an eye-witness also, of some of the blessed effects of this celebrated revolution. He might then have been regaled with that sight, so delectable to a modern philosopher;—opulence reduced to misery.

The stale pretence, that the league against the French has been the cause of their inhuman conduct to each other, cannot, by the most perverse sophistry, be applied to the Island of St. Domingo. That fine rich colony was ruined; its superb capital and villas reduced to ashes; one half of its inhabitants massacred, and the other half reduced to beggary, before an enemy ever appeared on the coast. No: It is that system of anarchy and blood that was celebrated at Birmingham on the 14th of July, 1791, that has been the cause of all this murder and devastation.

Nor let the Doctor pretend that this could not be foreseen. It was foreseen and foretold too, from the very moment a part of the Deputies to the States General were permitted to call themselves a national assembly. In proof of this, I could mention a dozen publications that came out under his own eye ; but I shall content myself with giving a short extract from a speech in the British parliament, which is the more proper on this occasion, as it was delivered but a few weeks before the period of the riots. " The Americans," said Mr. Burke, " have what was essentially necessary for freedom ; they have the phlegm of the good tempered Englishmen—they were fitted for Republicans by a republican education. Their revolution was not brought about by base and degenerate crimes ; nor did they overturn a government for the purposes of anarchy ; but they raised a republic, as nearly representing the British government as it was possible. They did not run into the absurdity of France, and by seizing on the *rights of man*, declare that the nation was to govern the nation, and prince prettyman to govern prettyman. There are in Canada many of the ancient inhabitants ; will it be proper to give them the French constitution ? In my opinion there is not a single circumstance that recommends the adoption of any part of it, for the whole is abominably bad—the production of folly not wisdom—of vice, not virtue : it contains nothing but extremes, as distant from each other as the poles—the parts are in eternal opposition to each other—it is founded on what is called the *rights of man*, but to my conviction it is founded on the *wrongs of man*, and I now hold in my hand an example of its effects on the French colonies—Domingo, Guadaloupe, and other French Islands, were rich, happy, and growing in strength and consequence in spite of the three last distressing wars, before they heard of the new doctrine of the rights of man ; but these rights were no sooner arrived at the Islands, than any spectator would have imagined that Pandora's box had been opened, and that Hell had yawned out discord, murder, and every mischief ; for anarchy, confusion and blood-shed raged every where ; it was a general summons for

" Black spirits, and white,
 " Blue spirits, and grey,
 " Mingle, mingle, mingle,
 " You that mingle may."

When the assembly heard of these disorders, they ordered troops to quell them ; but it proves that the troops have joined the insurgents, and murdered their commander. I look on the revolution with horror and detestation ; it is a revolution of consummate folly, formed and maintained by every vice."

But perhaps the Doctor's intense studies ; " his continual labours for the good of mankind," might not leave him to peruse the debates of Parliament ; however, we may fairly presume that he read the letters addressed to himself ; and if so, he

has read the following passage ; " You think that a neighbouring nation is emancipated from tyranny, and that a company of Englishmen may laudably express their joy on the occasion. Were your premises true, I would allow your conclusion. But let us wait the event. Philosophers should not be too credulous, or form their determination too rashly. It is very possible that all the magnificent schemes of your august diet in France may be succeeded by a ridiculous, a villainous, or a bloody catastrophe."

Either he foresaw the consequences of the French revolution or he did not foresee them : If he did not, he must confess that his penetration was far inferior to that of his antagonists, and even to that of the multitude of his countrymen ; for they all foresaw them. If he did foresee them, he ought to blush at being called the " friend of human happiness ;" for, to foresee such dreadful calamities and to form a deliberate plan for bringing them upon his country he must have a disposition truly diabolical. If he did not foresee them, he must have an understanding little superior to that of an idiot : If he did, he must have the heart of a *Marat*. Let him choose.

But, it is pretty clear that he foresaw the consequences, or, at least, that he approves of them ; for, as I have observed above, he sent his son into France, in the very midst of the massacres, to request the honor of becoming a French citizen ; and in his answer to the addressers at New York, he takes good care to express his disapprobation of the war pursued by his country (which he calls an infatuation) because its manifest tendency is to destroy that hydra, that system of anarchy which is the primary cause. Besides, is not his emigration itself a convincing proof, that his opinion still remains the same ? If he found himself mistaken, he would confess his error ; at least tacitly, by a change of conduct. Has he done this ? No : The French revolution is his system, and sooner than not see it established, I much question if he would not with pleasure see the massacre of all the human race.

Even suppose his intended plan of improvement had been the best in the world instead of the worst : The people of England had certainly a right to reject it. He claims, as an indubitable right, the right of thinking for *others*, and yet he will not permit the people of England to think for *themselves*. Paine says : " What a whole nation *wills*, it has a right to *do*." Consequently, what a whole nation does *not will*, it has a right *not to do*. Rousseau says : " The majority of a people has a right to *force* the rest to be *free* ;" but even the " insane Socrates of the national assembly" has never, in all his absurd reveries, had the folly to pretend, that a club of dissenting Mal-contents has a right to *force* a whole nation to be *free*. If the English chose to remain slaves, Bigots and Idolators, as the Doctor calls them, that was no business of his : He had nothing to do with them. He should have let them alone ; and perhaps, in due time, the abuses of their government would have come to that " *natural*

termination," which he trusts " will guard against all future abuses." But, no, said the Doctor, I will reform you—I will enlighten you—I will make you free. You shall not! say the people. But I will! says the Doctor. By —, say the people you shall not! " *And when Ahithopel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and gat him home to his house, to his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died, and was buried in the sepulchre of his father.*"

I now beg the reader's company in a slight review of the addresses delivered to the Doctor by the several patriotic societies at New York.*

It is no more than justice to say of these addresses, that they are in the lump distinguished for certain barrenness of thought, and vulgarity of style, which, were we not in possession of, the Doctor's answers, might be thought inimitable. If the parties were less known, one might be tempted to think that the addressers were dull by concert; and that, by way of retaliation, the Doctor was resolved to be as dull as they. At least, if this was their design, nobody will deny but they have succeeded to admiration.

"The governments of the old world," say the Democratic, "are most of them now basely combined to prevent the establishment of liberty in France, and to effect the total destruction of the Rights of Man."

What! The Rights of Man yet? I thought that *Liberty and Equality, the Rights of Man*, and all that kind of political cant, had long been discovered for the greatest Bore in nature. Are there people in this country, and people who pretend to possess a superior degree of sagacity too, who are dolts enough to talk about *French Liberty*, after what they see under their eyes this very day? Is not every Frenchman in the United States obliged to go to a justice of the peace every two or three months, to have a certificate of residence? And must he not have his certificate sworn to, and signed by four of the inhabitants besides the Magistrate? And must he not pay for this too? And if he fails in any part of this slavish ceremony, or goes into Canada or Florida, is he not marked out for the Guillotine? An Englishman may come when he will, stay as long as he pleases, go where he will, and return when he will to his own country, without finding any law of proscription, or confiscation, issued against him or his property. Which has most liberty?

B 2

* I. An address from "the Democratic Society."

II. From the "Tammany Society."

III. From the "Associated Teachers."

IV. From the "Republican Natives of Great Britain and Ireland."

These addresses with the answers to them having all appeared in the Gazettes, it will be useless to give them at length here.

I thought ~~no one~~ would dun our ears with *French liberty*, after the decree which obliges every merchant, under pain of the guillotine, to make a declaration of all his property in foreign countries, and to give up his right and title of such property to the Convention; and not only to make a declaration of his own, but of his neighbour's property also, under the same penalty! It has long been customary to express a detestation of the tyranny and cruelty of the Inquisition. But the inquisition, in the height of its severity, was never half so tyrannical as this decree. This is the boasted "gallic liberty." Let us hear their own definition of this liberty. "Liberty," says Barrere, in his report to the National Convention, on the 3d of January last, "Liberty, my dear fellow citizens, is a privileged and general creditor; not only has she a right to our *property* and *persons*, but to our *talents* and *courage*, and even to our *thoughts*." Oh Liberty! What a metamorphosis hast thou undergone in the hands of these political jugglers!

If this be liberty, may God in his mercy continue me the most abject slave. If this be liberty, who will say that the English did not do well in rejecting the Doctor's plan for making them free? The Democrats of New York accuse the allies of being combined to prevent the establishment of liberty in France, and to destroy the Rights of Man; when it is notorious that the French themselves have banished the very idea of the thing from among them; that is to say, if they ever had an idea of it. Nay, the Author of the *Rights of Man*, and the Authorefs of the *Rights of Women*, are at this moment starving in a dirty dungeon, not a hundred paces from the *sanctum sanctorum* of Liberty and Equality; and the poor unfortunate Goddess* herself is guillotined! So much for Liberty and the Rights of Man.

The Tammany Society comes forward in boasting of their "*venerable ancestors*;" and, says the Doctor in his answer, "Happy would our venerable ancestors have been to have found, &c." What! Were they the Doctor's ancestors too? I suppose he means in a figurative sense! But certainly, gentlemen, you made a *faux pas* in talking about your ancestors at all. It is always a tender subject, and ought to be particularly avoided by a body of men "who disdain the shackles of tradition."

You say, that in the United States "there exists a sentiment of free and candid enquiry, which disdains the shackles of tradition, preparing a rich harvest of improvement and the glorious triumph of truth." Knowing the religious, or rather the irreligious, principles of the person to whom this sentence was addressed, it is easy to divine its meaning. But, without flattery,

* Madame Hebert, who had the honour of representing this Deity, and who received, for a considerable time, the adorations and incense of the devout Parisians, was guillotined not long ago. It is impossible to say for what she was executed, as the court by which she was tried do not waste their precious time in committing their proceedings to writing,

your zeal surpasses that of the Doctor himself: He disdains *revelation only*; the authority of Moses, David, and a parcel of folks that nobody knows; but you disdain what your fathers have told you; which is the more surprising, as, at the same time, you boast of your *venerable* ancestors." People should always endeavour to be consistent, at least *when interest does not interfere*. However, suppose the shackles of revelation and tradition both completely shaken off, and the infidel unitarian system established in their stead; what good would the country derive from it? This is certainly worth enquiry; because a thing that will do no good, can be good for nothing. The people of these states are, in general, industrious, sober, honest, humane, charitable, and sincere; dutiful children and tender parents. This is the character of the people, and who will pretend to say that the gospel, the belief of which has chiefly contributed to their acquiring of this amiable character, ought to be exchanged for the atheistical or deistical doctrines of a Manvel or a Priestley? For my part, I can see nothing to induce us to try the experiment; no, not even "the rich harvest of improvement and the glorious triumph of truth," that you say it promises. We know *the truth* already; we want no improvement in religious knowledge; all we want is to practice better what we know; and it is not likely that our practice would be improved by disdaining the theory.

You allow that a public and sincere spirit of toleration exists among us: What more is wanted? If you were to effect a general disdain of the shackles of tradition, perhaps the "rich harvest" would be a corruption of manners, discord, persecution, and blood. The same causes generally produces the same effects. To see and be terrified at these effects, we have only to turn our eyes to that distracted country, where it must be allowed even by yourselves, the shackles of tradition are sufficiently disdained.

Doctor Priestley professes to wish for nothing but toleration; liberty of conscience. But let us contrast these moderate and disinterested professions with what he has advanced in some of his latest publications. I have already taken notice of the assertion, in his letters to the students of Hackney, "that the established church *must fall*." In his address to the Jews (whom, by the bye, he seems to wish to form a coalition with), he says, "all the persecutions of the Jews have arisen from *Trinitarian*, that is to say, *Idoltrous Christians*." Idoltrous Christians! It is the first time, I believe, these two words were ever joined together. Is this the language of a man who wants only toleration, in a country where the established church, and the most part of the dissenters also, are professedly *Trinitarians*? He will undoubtedly say that the people of this country are *idolaters* too, for there is not one out of a hundred at most, who does not firmly believe in the doctrine of the Trinity.

Such a man complains of persecution with a very ill grace. But suppose he had been persecuted for a mere matter of opinion; it would be only receiving the measure he has meted to others. Has he not approved of the unmerciful persecution of the unfortunate and worthy part of the French clergy? men as far surpassing him in piety and utility as in suffering. They did not want to coin a new religion; they wanted only to be permitted to enjoy, without interruption, the one they had been educated in, and that they had sworn in the most solemn manner, to continue in to the end of their lives. The Doctor says in his Address to the Methodists: "You will judge whether I have not reason and scripture on my side. You will at least be convinced that *I have so persuaded myself*; and you cannot but respect a real lover of truth, and *a desire to bring others into it*, even in the man who is unfortunately in an error." Does not this man blush at approving of the base, cowardly and bloody persecutions that have been carried on against a set of men, who erred, if they did err at all from an excess of conscientiousness. He talks of persecution, and puts on the mockery of woe: Theirs has been persecution indeed. Robbed, dragged from their homes, or obliged to hide from the sight of man, in continual expectation of the assassin's stab: Some transported like common fellows, for ever; and a much greater number butchered, by those to whose happiness their lives had been devoted, and in that country that they loved too well to disgrace by their apostacy! How gladly would one of these unfortunate conscientious men have escaped from America, leaving fortune, friends and all behind him! and how different has been the fate of Dr. Priestley! Ah, Gentlemen! do not let us be deceived by false pretenders: The manner of his emigration is, of itself, a sufficient proof that the step was not necessary, to the enjoyment of "protection from violence."

You say, he has "long *disinterestedly* laboured for his country." 'Tis true he says so; but we must not believe him more disinterested than other reformers. If toleration had been all he wanted; if he had contented himself with the permission of spreading his doctrines, he would have found this in England, or in almost any country, as well as here. The man that wants only to avoid persecution, does not make a noisy and fastidious display of his principles, or attack with unbridled indecency, the religion of the country in which he lives. He who avoids persecution, is seldom persecuted.

"The lifted axe, the agonizing wheel,

"Luke's iron crown, and Damien's bed of steel,

"To men remote from pow'r but rarely known,

"Leave reason, faith, and conscience all our own."

But the Doctor did not want to be remote from power or *profit* either; for in his sermon on the test laws, he proposes "to set apart one church for the dissenters in every considerable town, and a certain allotment of *tithes* for their minister, pro-

portioned to the number of dissenters in the district." A very modest and disinterested request truly! Was this man seeking peace and toleration *only*? He thinks these facts are unknown in America. After all his clamour against tithes, and his rejoicing on account of their abolition in France, he had no objection to their continuing in England, provided he came in for a share. Astonishing disinterestedness.

In this country there is nothing to fear from the Doctor's disinterestedness; because there being no public revenue annexed to any worship whatever, there is nothing to wrangle for; but from the disseminating of his deistical doctrine there is much to fear. A celebrated deist in England says that there can be no such thing as an atheist; that it is impossible: For says he, "every one must necessarily believe that some cause or other produced the Universe; he may call that cause what he pleases; *god, nature, or even chance*; still he believes in the efficacy of that cause, and therefore is no atheist." And indeed we shall find that deism is but another name for atheism, whether we consider it in the theory or in the practice. That we should not be bettered by the introduction of deism or atheism, I think is a clear case. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." While this fear existed in France, there was some kind of manners, some kind of justice left; but ever since the deluded people have been taught that Jesus Christ was an infamous impostor; and the worship of him has been forbidden as "idolatrous," the whole infernal legion seems to be let loose amongst them; and the nation appears marked out for a dreadful example to all mankind. Indeed some such example was necessary to cure the world of the infidel philosophy of Voltaire, Rousseau, Gibbon, Priestley, and the rest of that enlightened tribe. We are continually exclaiming against prejudice, without attending to its effect on ourselves. I am afraid prejudice in favour of the French Revolution has led Americans to approve many things, which a few years ago they would have viewed with the utmost abhorrence; and that they would even now view with abhorrence in any other nation. And here I cannot help taking notice of an article that appeared not many days since in one of our public papers. The writer is giving a list of eminent persons who have "arisen on the democratic floor," which he concludes with *Marat, St. Paul, and Jesus Christ*. Is it not a most horrid blasphemy to put the Son of God, the Prince of Peace, on a footing with the bloody author of the massacres at Paris and Versailles? I hope and believe, that such Blasphemers are rare in the United States, and the only way to keep them so, is for the people to reject unanimously every attempt to debase Christianity, in whatever shape, and under whatever disguise it may appear.

In the address of "the republican natives of Great Britain and Ireland, resident at New York," we find a very extraordinary passage indeed. But before we say any thing about this

address, it will not be amiss to say a word or two about the addressers. I believe one might venture to say that there are, but very few natives of Ireland among them; because the emigrants from that country, being generally engaged in agricultural pursuits from their first arrival here, have not the time to form themselves into political societies; and the words "Great Britain" might probably have been supplied by *one word*. However, as the gentlemen have not thought this word worthy of a place in their address, I can by no means think of introducing it here. But let us see what they say of themselves: "After a *fruitless opposition* to a corrupt and tyrannical government, *many of us, like you*, sought freedom and protection in the United States of America. We look back on our native country with *pity and indignation*, at the outrages that humanity has sustained in the persons of the virtuous Muir and his patriotic associates." We may then fairly suppose, that these "republican natives of Great Britain and Ireland" can be no other than the members of that renowned convention of which the "*virtuous Muir*," who is now fortunately on his passage to Botany-Bay, was president.

The passage of their address, alluded to above, is as follows: "Participating in the many blessings, which the government is calculated to insure, we are happy in giving it this proof of our respectful attachment: We are only *grieved*, that a system of such beauty and excellence should be at all *tarnished* by the existence of *slavery in any form*; but, as Friends to the equal rights of man, we must be permitted to say, that we wish these rights extended to every human being, *be his complexion what it may*. We however look forward with pleasing anticipation to a *yet more perfect state of society*; and from that love of liberty which forms so distinguished a trait in the American character, are taught to hope that this last, *this worst disgrace to a free government*, will finally and for ever be done away." So! These gentlemen are hardly landed in the United States before they begin to cavil against the government, and to pant after a *more perfect state of Society*! If they have already discovered that the system is *tarnished by the very last and worst disgrace of a free government*, what may we not reasonably expect from their future researches? If they with their virtuous President had been landed in the southern states, they might have lent a hand to finish the great work, so happily begun by citizens Santhornax and Polverel. They have caught the *itch* of addressing, petitioning and remonstrating in their own country; let them scratch themselves into a cure; but do not let them attempt spreading their disorder. They ought to remember, that they are come here "to seek freedom and protection" *for themselves*, and not *for others*. When the people of these states are ready for a total abolition of negro slavery, they will make a shift to see the propriety of adopting the measure without the assistance of these northern lights. In the mean time, as the convention cannot here enter on their

legislative functions, they may amuse themselves with a fable that I have translated from the French for their particular use.

THE POT-SHOP, A FABLE.

In a pot-shop that was well stocked with ware of all sorts, a discontented ill formed pitcher unluckily bore the sway. One day after the mortifying neglect of several customers, "gentlemen" said he, addressing himself to his brown brethren in general, "gentlemen, with your permission, we are a set of tame fools, without ambition, without courage: Condemned to the vilest uses, we suffer all without murmuring. Let us dare to declare ourselves, and we shall soon see the difference. That superb ewer, which, like us, is but earth; those gilded jars, vases, china, and in short all those elegant nonenses, whose colours and beauty have neither weight nor solidity, must yield to our strength and give place to our superior merit."

This civic harangue was received with peals of applause, and the pitcher (chosen president) became the organ of the assembly. Some however more moderate than the rest, attempted to calm the minds of the multitude. But all those which are called jordan or chamber pots, were become intractable; Eager to vie with the bowls and cups, they were impatient almost to madness to quit their obscure abodes, and to shine upon the table, kiss the lip and ornament the cub-board.

In vain did a wise water jug (some say it was a platter) make them a long and serious discourse upon the peacefulness of their vocation; "Those," says he, "who are destined to great employments are rarely the most happy. We are all of the same clay, tis true; but he who made us, formed us for different functions. One is for ornament, another for use. The pots the least important are often the most necessary. Our employments are extremely different, and so are our talents."

This had a wonderful effect; the most stupid began to open their ears; Perhaps it would have succeeded, if a grease pot had not cried out with a decisive tone: "You reason like an ass; to the devil with you and your silly lessons."

Now the scale was turned again: All the hord of jordan, pans and pitchers applauded the superior eloquence and reason of the grease pot. In short, they determined on the enterprize; but a dispute arose who should be chief: All would command and none obey. It was then you might have heard a clutter; Pots, pans and pitchers, mugs, jugs and jordan, all put themselves in motion at once; and so quick and so well wisely were their operations conducted, that the whole was soon changed—not into china, but *rubbish*.

Let us leave the application of this fable to those for whom

it is intended, and come to the address of "the associated teachers in the city of New York."

From the profession of these gentlemen, one would have wished not to find them among the doctor's addressers; and it will be for those who employ the "associated teachers" to judge how far their approbation and praise of the writings of such a man is a proof of their being calculated for "the arduous and important task of cultivating the human mind." They very civilly invite the doctor to assist them to "*form the man*;" and, in his answer, he seems to hint that he may possibly accept the invitation. All I can say on this matter is, if he should embrace this profession, I hope he will be exactly as successful in forming the man, as he has been in reforming him.

In the answer to the "associated Teachers" the Doctor observes, that *classes* of men, as well as *individuals*, are apt to form *too high* ideas of their *own importance*." Never was a juster observation than this, and never was this observation more fully verified than in the parties themselves. The Doctor's self importance is sufficiently depicted in the quotation that I have given from his letter to the people of Birmingham; and as for the "associated teachers," how familiarly soever they may talk of "the intriguing policies and vitiating refinements of the European World," I must say, I think, they know but little of what passes in that world; or they never would have larded with such extravagant eulogiums, productions which, in general have been long exploded.

With respect to the doctor's metaphysical reveries, or, in other words, his system of infidelity, I shall leave to himself the task of exposing that to the detestation of Americans, as it has long been to that of the English. Of his scientific productions, I propose, in a little time, to give the public a short review; meanwhile I refer the curious reader to the publications of the royal society, of 1791 and 1792, and to Doctor Bewley's treatise on air. He will there see his system of chemistry and natural philosophy detected, exposed and defeated; and the "celebrated philosopher" himself accused and convicted of plagiarism. He will there find the key to the following sentence: "The *patronage* to be met with in monarchical governments, is ever *capricious*, and as often employed to bear down merit as to promote it, having for its object, not science, or any thing useful to mankind, but the mere reputation of the patron, *who is seldom any judge of science*." This is the language of every soured, neglected author, from a sorry ballad monger to a doctor with half a dozen initials at the end of his name.

As to his talents as a writer we have only to open our eyes to be convinced that they are far below mediocrity. His style is uncouth and superlatively diffuse. Always involved in *minutiae*, every sentence is a string of parentheses, in finding the end of which, the reader is lucky if he does not lose the proposition they were meant to illustrate. In short, the whole of his phraseology is extremely disgusting; to which may be added, that even in point of grammar, he is very often incorrect.

As a proof of what I have here asserted, I could give a thousand sentences from his writings ; but I choose one or two from his answers to the addressers, as these pieces are in every body's hands : And not to criticise unfairly, I shall take the first sentence I come at. It runs thus :

" Viewing with the deepest concern, as you do, the prospect that is now exhibited in Europe, those troubles which are the natural offspring of their forms of government, originating indeed in the spirit of liberty, but gradually degenerating into tyrannies, equally degrading to the rulers and the ruled, I rejoice in finding an asylum from persecution in a country in which those abuses have come to a natural termination, and produced another system of liberty, founded on such wise principles, as I trust, will guard against all future abuses, those artificial distinctions in society, from which they sprung, being completely eradicated, that protection from violence, which laws and government promise in all countries, but which I have not found in my own, I doubt not I shall find with you, though I cannot promise to be a better subject of this government, than my whole conduct will evince that I have been to that of Great Britain."

This is neither the *style periodique*, nor the *style coupé* ; it is I presume the *style entortillé* : for one would certainly think that the author had racked his imagination to render what he had to say unintelligible. This sentence of monstrous length is cut asunder in the middle by a semicolon, which, except that it serves the weary reader by way of half-way house, might be placed in any other part of the sentence, to at least, equal advantage. In fact, this is not a sentence ; it is a rigmarole ramble, that has neither beginning nor ending, and conveys to us no idea of any thing but the author's incapacity.

" Viewing with the deepest concern as you do, the prospect that is now exhibited in Europe, those troubles which are the natural offspring of THEIR forms of government, &c." What, in the name of goodness, does this mean ? *Troubles* is the only antecedent that can be found to *their*, and the necessary conclusion is, *troubles have their forms of government*.

The doctor says, in his answer to the Tammany society : " Happy would our venerable ancestors, as you justly call them *have been*, to *have found* America such a retreat to them." It may perhaps be useful to the learned Doctor to know that he ought to have said : " Happily would our venerable ancestors, as you justly call them, have been, to *find* America, &c."

I grant that there is great reason to believe, that the Doctor was resolved to be as dull as his addressers ; but I assert that it is impossible for a person accustomed to commit his thoughts to paper with the smallest degree of taste or correctness, to fall into such gross solecisms, or to tack phrases together in such an awkward home-spun manner. In short, he cannot be fit for even the post of *castigator* ; and therefore it is to be hoped that the " associated teachers" will not lessen their " importance" by admitting him amongst them ; that is to say, except it be as a scholar.

There are many things that astonish us in the addresses, amongst which the *compassion* that the addressers express for that "*infatuated*" and "*devoted country*," Great Britain, certainly is not the least.

The Democratic society, with a hatred against tyranny, that would have become the worthy nephew of Damien, or the great Marat himself, say: "The multiplied oppressions which characterise that government, excite in us the most painful sensations, and exhibit a spectacle as disgusting in itself as dishonorable to the British name."

And what a tender affectionate concern do the sons of Tammany express for the poor distressed unfortunate country of their "*venerable ancestors*." "A country," say they, "although now presenting a prospect frightful to the eye of humanity, yet *once* the nurse of sciences, of arts, of heroes, and of freemen, a country which although at present apparently *devoted to destruction*, we *fondly* hope may yet *tread back the steps of infamy and ruin*, and *once more rise conspicuous among the free nations of the earth*."

But of all the addressers none seem so zealous on this subject as "the republican natives of Great Britain and Ireland." "While," say they, "we look back on our native country with emotions of pity and indignation, at the outrages human nature has sustained, in the persons of the virtuous *Muir* and his patriotic associates; and deeply lament the fatal apathy into which our countrymen have fallen: We desire to be thankful to the great author of our being, that we are in America, and that it has pleased him, in his wise providence, to make these United States an Asylum, not only from the immediate tyranny, of the British government, but also from those impending calamities, which its increasing despotism, and multiplied iniquities, must infallibly bring down on a deluded and oppressed people." What an enthusiastic warmth is here! No solemn-league-and-covenant, prayer, embellished with the nasal sweetness of the conventicle, was ever more affecting.

To all this the Doctor very piteously echoes back "sigh for sigh, and groan for groan; and when the fountain of their eyes is dry, he supplies the place and weeps for both."

There is something so pathetic, so irresistibly moving in all this, that a man must have a hard heart indeed to read it, and not burst into laughter.

In speaking of Monarchies, it has often been lamented that the sovereign seldom, or never hears the truth; and much afraid I am, that this is equally applicable to democracies. What court sycophants are to a prince, demagogues are to a people; and the latter kind of parasites is by no means less dangerous than the former; perhaps more so, as being more ambitious and more numerous. God knows, there were too many of this description in America, before the arrival of Doctor Priestley: I can therefore see no reason for boastings and addressings on account of the acquisition.

Every one must observe, how the doctor has fallen at once into the track of those, who were already in possession of the honorable post. Finding a popular prejudice prevailing against his country, and not

possessing that *patria caritas*, which is the characteristic of his countrymen, he has not been ashamed to attempt making his court by flattering that prejudice. I grant that a prejudice against this nation is not only excusable, but almost commendable in *Americans*; but the misfortune is, this prejudice exposes them to deception, and makes them the sport of every intriguing adventurer. Suppose it be the interest of *Americans* that Great Britain should be ruined and even annihilated, in the present contest; it can never be their interest to believe that this desirable object is already nearly or quite accomplished, at a time when she is become more formidable than ever, in every quarter of the globe. And with respect to the internal situation of that country, we ought not to suffer ourselves to be deceived by "gleanings from morning chronicles, or Dublin gazettes." For, if we insist that newspaper report is the criterion by which we ought to judge of the governments and state of other countries, we must allow the same measure to foreigners with respect to our own country; and then what must the people of England think of the government of the United States, upon reading a page or two from the slovenly pen of *Agricola*.

"It is charitable," says this democrat, "It is charitable to believe many who signed the constitution, never dreamed of the measures taking place, which alas! we now experience. By this double government, we are involved in unnecessary burdens which neither we nor our fathers ever knew. Such a monster of a government has seldom ever been known on earth. We are obliged to maintain two governments, with their full number of officers from head to foot. Some of them receive such wages as never were heard of before in any government upon earth; and all this bestowed on *Aristocrats* for doing next to nothing. A blessed revolution! a blessed revolution indeed! but farmers, mechanics and labourers have no share in it, we are the asses who must have the honor of paying them all without any adequate service. Now let the impartial, judge whether our government, taken collectively, answers the great end of *protecting our persons and property*! Or whether it is not rather calculated to drain us of our money, and give it to men who have not rendered adequate service for it. Had an inspired prophet told us that the things which our eyes see, in the beginning of the revolution, he might have met Jeremiah's fate; or if we had believed him, *not one in a thousand would have resisted Great Britain*. Indeed, my countrymen, we are so loaded by our new governments, that we can have little heart to attempt to move under all our burdens; we have this consolation, when things come to the worst, there must be a change, and *we may rest satisfied, that either the federal or state governments must fall*."

If "gleanings" like these were published in England, would not the people naturally exclaim: What! the boasted government of America come to this already? The poor Americans are dreadfully tyrannized by the *Aristocrats*! There will certainly be a *revolution* in America soon! They would be just as much mistaken as the people in this country are, who talk of a revolution in England.

Neither ought we to look upon the emigration of persons from England to this country as a proof of their being persecuted, and of the tyranny of the English government. It is paying America a very poor compliment, to suppose that nothing short of persecution, could bring settlers to its shores. This is besides the most unfortunate proof that could possibly be produced by the advocates of the French Revolution: For, if the emigration of a person to this country be a proof of a tyranny existing in that from which he comes, how superlatively tyrannical must the government in France be? But they say, those who emigrate from France are Aristocrats: They are not persecuted; they emigrate because they *hate a free country*. What! do they really come to *America* because they *hate a free country*? Did the governors of Martinico, &c. make a capitulation to be sent here, *to avoid going to a free country*? The Democratic society will certainly oblige the world very much in explaining this enigma.

I am one of those who wish to believe that foreigners come to this country from choice, and not from necessity. America opens a wide field for enterprize; wages for all mechanics are better, and the means of subsistence proportionably cheaper than in Europe. This is what brings foreigners amongst us: They become citizens of America for the honest purposes of commerce, of turning their industry and talents to the best account, and of bettering their fortunes. By their exertions to enrich themselves, they enrich the state, lower the wages, and render the country less dependent upon others. The most numerous as well as the most useful are mechanics; perhaps a cobbler with his hammer and awls, is a more valuable acquisition than a dozen philosophi-theologi-political empirics with all their boasted apparatus. Of all the English arrived in these States (since the war) no one was ever calculated to render them less service than Doctor Priestley; and what is more, perhaps no one (before or since, or even in the war) ever intended to render them less. His preference to the American government is all affectation: His emigration was not voluntary: He staid in England 'till he saw no hopes of recovering a lost reputation; and then bursting with envy and resentment, he fled into what the Tammany society very justly call "banishment," covered with the universal detestation of his countrymen.

THE END.